

UTAH-- PSC approves Qwest wire center settlement

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The Public Service Commission released an order this week approving a joint settlement filed by Qwest Corp. and several competitive carriers that resolves several disputed issues regarding the impairment status of Qwest wire centers throughout the state, concluding that the settlement is "just and reasonable in providing a global resolution of the issues raised in this docket."

Qwest, along with competitive carriers Covad Communications Co., DIECA Communications, Inc., Eschelon Telecom, Inc., Integra Telecom Holdings, Inc., McLeod USA Telecommunications Services, Inc., U.S. Link, Inc., and XO Communications Services, Inc., submitted the settlement agreement to regulatory commissions in Arizona, Colorado, Minnesota, Oregon, and Utah as an effort to resolve outstanding issues related to the designation of nonimpaired wire centers in Qwest's territory. (06/26/07)

To address issues arising from the implementation of the FCC's "triennial review" remand order (TRRO), several regulatory agencies commenced proceedings regarding the designation of nonimpaired wire centers in Qwest's territory. Among other things, commissions looked into impairment analysis, line-count methodology, and other procedures regarding the evaluation and implementation of future wire-center classifications.

Among other things, the settlement resolves issues related to nonrecurring charges for conversions of unbundled network elements (UNEs) to alternative services or products, including an agreed-upon NRC rate and length of term, how credits may be made for those competitive carries which have already paid a higher NRC rate and the status of the rate after three years.

The agreement also provides a methodology that the parties have agreed to, for purposes of nonimpaired facilities, to determine nonimpairment or tier designations, including how to count business lines and fiber-based collocators, and the process by which additions to the nonimpaired wire-center list would occur in the future. (Docket 06-049-40) - Carrie DeLeon, carrie.deleon@wolterskluwer.com